

**TOWN OF ELSMERE
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
November 3, 2009
6:30 P.M.**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

CALL TO ORDER:

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Lindell – Present
Commissioner Sheldon – Absent
Commissioner Smith – Present
Commissioner Swain – Present
Commissioner Acton – Present
Commissioner Russo - Present
Chairman Backer – Present

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Approval of the Amended Minutes from the August 4, 2009 Planning
Commission Meeting

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Russo to approve the amended the minutes of the August 4, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lindell.

VOTE: All in favor VOTE: 6-0, 1 Absent Motion Carried

Approval of the Minutes from the October 6, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Lindell to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Swain.

VOTE: All in favor VOTE: 6-0, 1 Absent Motion Carried

OLD BUSINESS:

Review of the Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Ed O'Donnell from the University of Delaware was present to review the Comprehensive Plan with the Commission.

Mr. O'Donnell informed the Commission that instead of this just being the 5 year Comprehensive Plan update, they hope that this will pass as the new 10 Year Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the Plan is currently 85% completed, only 3-4 chapters are left to review, update & place into the plan.

Town Manager John Giles asked where historical preservation is included in the new comprehensive plan.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that this will be in the Cultural Resources section of the plan.

At this time there were multiple conversations occurring at the same time and the tape was unable to be transcribed.

Commissioner Russo questioned what type of people the Town wants to attract? This should be something we include in our plan, because it could affect our economic status.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that the Town should consider this but it should not be the basis of the entire plan and that it would be difficult to say what type of people would be attracted to Elsmere.

A discussion occurred regarding the type of people/businesses we want to attract and what municipalities are currently doing so.

A discussion occurred regarding the amount of parkland and the uses that are allowable and fact that they cannot be converted to anything but a park once state funding has been used to furnish or purchase.

Chairman Backer discussed addressing the possible annexation of the General Motors property into the Town of Elsmere.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that these concerns were addressed in the plan as a area of possible interest under the annexation portion of the plan.

Town Manager, John Giles asked if we should include the longitude and latitude location of the Town in the Comprehensive Plan since we are in the GPS day and age.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that it was not necessary but could be easily included.

Mr. Giles asked about accuracy of history within the Comprehensive Plan, such as official incorporation date being listed as March 9, 1909 and not February 9, 1909 as it has been previously celebrated. The official state legislature stated that the Town was incorporated on March 9, 1909.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that the history is not something that the University does the research on, it is something that the municipalities provide, and typically it is a version of history that is obtained from one of its residents making it partially reliable.

At this time there were multiple conversations occurring at once and the tape was unable to be transcribed.

Mr. Giles asked why the communities of Greenbrier and Dogwood Hollow were not mentioned as significant developments that have occurred and should be mentioned as part of the housing stock.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that he would address this and amend the draft.

A discussion occurred questioning if the Town should consider raising the height requirements above 35 feet.

Mr. Giles stated that he would like the plan to address being able to subdivide properties and build new residential structures in the rear yards of existing structures.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that he would be sure to address this concern within the plan.

Mr. Giles pointed out several grammatical and informational errors such as numbers or descriptions.

Mr. Giles asked that the plan be clarified to explain the exact possible uses of the Town Hall facilities by removing the words Community Center be replaced by Meeting Center or be removed all together.

Chairman Backer suggested that the recommendation be removed all together.

The Commission Agreed.

A brief discussion occurred regarding the loss of Municipal Street Aid Funding and what it means financially for the Town.

Mr. Giles stated that he would like the plan to include that the Town would like to discuss how to identify and promote the businesses located on B and O Lane.

Mr. Giles stated that the Little Mill Creek Project is complete and the Town has not seen flooding during significant precipitation where the event was similar to those that caused flooding in the past.

There was a conversation on the importance of monitoring water quality and the difference in water quality from Town water and water in the City of Wilmington.

It was determined that the maps that were sent over for the Commissions review were the wrong maps, they are the maps from the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and should not be referred to.

A brief discussion occurred regarding maps, however the Town's comments were given to Mr. O'Donnell to take with him because the review was completed for the wrong maps.

At this time multiple conversations were occurring at once and the tape was unable to be transcribed. This conversation occurred for a lengthy time with multiple conversations occurring during the map reviews.

Chairman Backer asked if any of the Commission Members had further concerns regarding the Comprehensive Plan.

The Commission responded that they did not.

Chairman Backer thanks Mr. Ed O'Donnell, Mr. Herb Inden & Valerie from Delaware State Housing Authority.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

ITEMS SUBMITTED BY CHAIRMAN AND BOARD MEMBERS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Swain to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Russo.

VOTE: All in favor VOTE: 6-0, 1 Absent Motion Carried

At this time the meeting was adjourned.

These minutes summarize the agenda items and other issues discussed at the November 3, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting. Votes are recorded accurately. The audio tape(s) of this meeting will be available at Town Hall for a period of two years from the date these minutes are approved. The audio tape(s) may be reviewed at Town Hall by appointment and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

LEON BACKER, CHAIRMAN

CHARLES LINDELL, SECRETARY